For the Logan Collection
A. M. Bilding
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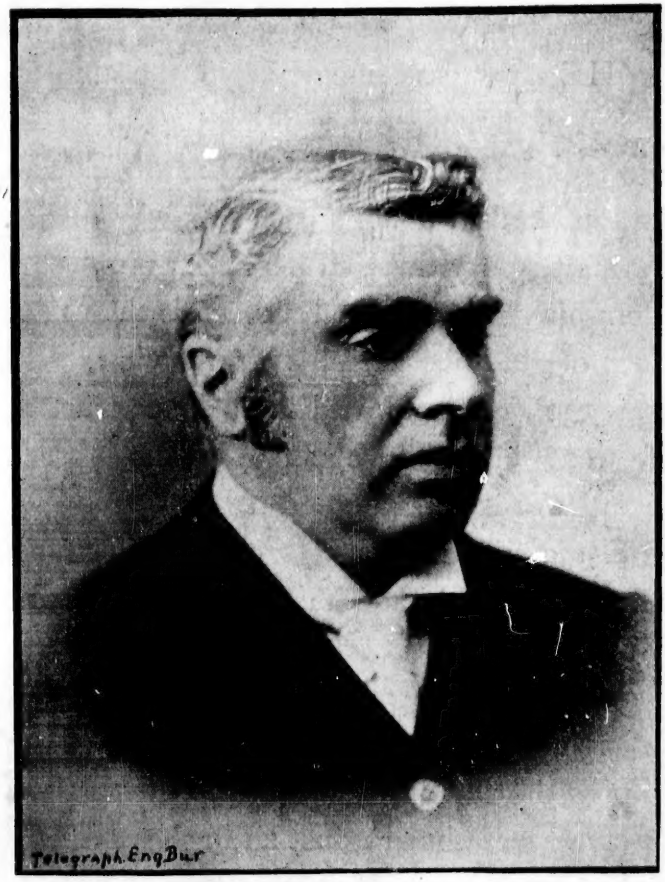

SIR JOHN THOMPSON,

PREMIER OF CANADA.

Sir John Thompson.

(Died at Windsor Castle on December 12th, 1894; his remains were borne in state to Canada by H. M. S. Blenheim, and were interred on January 3rd, 1895, with national honors, in his native city of Halifax.)

THE darkness came while yet the sun was high,
And dimmed forever that unfaltering eye,
Whose vision pierced the passing clouds of strife,
And marked in honor's paths his way of life.
No dreams of glory dwarfed his loftier aim,
To whom his country's good was more than fame;
No sheen of gold obscured his clearer view,
Who saw the right, and held the balance true.
His life went out within the storied walls
Of ancient Windsor's animated halls,
Where England's sons for ages o'er the foam
From flood and field have borne their trophies home
To lay at England's feet. Alas! that one,
The Greater Britain's great and loyal son,
Whose eagle vision swept a wider sky,
Should pass the stately portals but to die.
Fame's laurel wreaths are dust and ashes now,
The seal of Death upon that lofty brow
Proclaims a more imperial sovereignty
Than hers who holds the empire of the sea.
His country mourns—and yet—was fate unkind?
The onward look of that untrammelled mind

Saw closer drawn the loving ties that hold
These kindred nations in their sacred fold.
Love kindles hearts by kindred sorrow thrilled
—Was not his dream of life in death fulfilled?
When England's empress-mother to her breast,
With soothing words an orphaned maiden pressed,
And kissed the cheek that streamed with hopeless tears,
Not all the statecraft of a thousand years,
With all its mastery of designing arts,
Could strike so deep a chord in loyal hearts.
The solemn tolling of the minster bells
To all the world the tale of sorrow tells;
The funeral pomp, the pageantry of state,
Declare that England mourns the fallen great.
Across the wintry ocean's tossing breast
They bear his body to its final rest,
And ocean's mistress trains her dogs of war
To guard the passage of his funeral car.
His own loved city claims that sacred dust,
But wider realms will share the solemn trust,
That fell unguarded from the nerveless hand
Of one who well had served his native land.
The matchless mind, the heights his genuis won,
Shed lustre on the state that calls him son,
—A man who lived in honor, died in fame,
And left on memory's page a stainless name.

St. John, N. B. A. M. BELDING.